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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/670,414	09/24/2003	John P. Bosch	P02746	7928

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EXAMINER

SAWHNEY, HARGOBIND S

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2875

DATE MAILED: 02/24/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/670,414	BOSCH ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Hargobind S Sawhney	2875	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 24 September 2003.
- 2a) ☐ This action is FINAL. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☒ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because the sentence in first two lines is not complete. Correction is required.

Claim Objections

2. Claim 4 is objected to because of the following informalities:

Claim 4, line 2, "said light blocking means" lacks antecedent basis. The independent Claim 1, on which Claim 4 is dependent, does not include the limitation "a light blocking means".

Claim 10, line 2, "said translucent housing means" should be rephrased as -- said at least one translucent housing" as recited in base Claim 6. The above-indicated limitation lacks antecedent basis.

Appropriate correction is required.

Claim 4 of the instant application has been examined considering "a light blocking means" as -- at least one light blocking indicia means --.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

3. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(e) the invention was described in (1) an application for patent, published under section 122(b), by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent or (2) a patent granted on an application for patent by another filed in the United States before the invention by the applicant for patent, except that an international application filed under the treaty defined in section 351(a) shall have the effects for purposes of this subsection of an application filed in the United States only if the international application designated the United States and was published under Article 21(2) of such treaty in the English language.

4. Claims 1-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Norman (US Patent No.: 6,338,563 B1).

Regarding claims 1-5, Norman ('563 B1) discloses a vehicle accessory system 600 useable with a plug-in accessory outlet, comprising:

- a translucent housing means 602 – including a translucent means 604 - receiving a plug-in accessory useable with a plug-in outlet 606 (Abstract, Figure 6, column 4, line 16, and column 5, lines 43-46, claim 1);
- an illumination means 620 positioned within the translucent housing 602 (Figure 6, column 4, lines 35 and 36);
- a light diffusing means 614 – also serving as apertures in the light blocking means 604 - diffusing the light generated by the illumination means 620 (Figure 6, column 4, line 16, and column 5, lines 43-46);
- light blocking means – including the portion of lens 604 excluding indicia 614, and the reflector body 602 – blocking a substantial exit of the light

from the housing means 602 (Figure 6, column 4, lines 35-37, and column 5, lines 43-46);

- the light blocking means including the reflecting means 602 internally reflecting the light from the illuminating means 620 and light diffusing means 604 (Figure 6, column 4, lines 35-37);
- the light blocking means- including a light diffusing means 604 with aperture means 614 including indicia (Figure 6 column 5, lines 43-46); and
- the light blocking means, including a cord retaining means 624 (Figure 6, column 4, line 10) positioned on the reflector body 602 (Figure 6).

5. Claims 6, 7, 17, 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Baldwin (US Patent No.: 6,672,748 B2).

Regarding claims 6, 7, 17 and 18, Baldwin ('748 B2) discloses a vehicle accessory system 600, for use with a plug-in accessory outlet, comprising:

- a translucent housing 14 – the housing including a translucent thin-panel illuminator 10 - receiving a plug-in accessory useable with a plug-in outlet 13 (Figure 2, column 3, lines 1-7, 30 and 31);
- an illumination means 10 positioned within the translucent housing 14 (Figure 2, column 3, lines 30 and 31);
- a light diffuser 9 diffusing the light generated by the illumination 10 (Figure 2, column 3, lines 48-51);
- light blockers 9,10,14 – the portion of lens 9 covering indicia LOGO (Figure 2), and the combination of reflective back surface of the

- translucent thin panel 10 with element 14 – blocking a substantial exit of the light from the housing means 14 (Figure 2, column 3, lines 38-46);
- the illuminator 10 including an LED (Figure 2, column 3, lines 23-26 and 30-35);
- the light blocker – back cover - being an opaque cover attachable to the housing 14 – the housing including a translucent thin-panel illuminator 10 – (Figure 2);
- the light blocker- the reflective back surface of the light panel 10- including opaque coating (Figure 2, column 3, lines 29-35);

6. Claims 6, 7, 19 and 20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Remeyer et al. (US Patent No.: 5,192,126).

Regarding claims 6, 7, 19 and 20, Remeyer et al. ('126) discloses a vehicle accessory system 10 (Figure 1), for use with a plug-in accessory outlet, comprising:

- a translucent housing 18 (Figure 1, column 4, lines 66-68, column 5, lines 15) receiving a plug-in accessory 26 useable with a plug-in outlet 92 (Figure 1, column 5, lines 64-68);
- an illumination means 26 positioned within the translucent housing 18 (Figure 2, column 3, lines 30 and 31);
- a light diffuser 14 diffusing the light generated by the illumination 26 (Figure 1, column 4, lines 64-68 and column 5, lines 1-5);
- light blockers 32 blocking a substantial exit of the light from the housing 18 means (Figure 1, column 4, lines 32-37);

- the light translucent housing 18 comprising sufficiently transparent portion – the portion exclusive of the diffusing portion 14 – indicating the internal content (Figure 1, column 4, lines 64-68 and column 5, lines 1-5); and
- a vehicle (not shown) comprising a plug-in accessory outlet within view of the driver (not shown, column 5, lines 62-68).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

8. Claims 8, 9, 11 and 12 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baldwin (US Patent No.: 6,672,748 B2) in view of Pristash et al. (US Patent No.: 5,136,480).

Regarding Claim 8, Baldwin (748 B2) discloses a vehicle accessory system including a panel operationally coupled to light source. However, Baldwin ('748 B2) does not specifically disclose the panel light source optically coupled with at least one LED.

On the other hand, Pristash et al. ('480) discloses a panel light source 1 (Figure 1) including: an LED 3 (Figure 1, column 3, lines 18-24) and a reflective back surface (Figure 1, column 3, line 51).

It would be have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the vehicle accessory of Baldwin (748 B2) by providing the panel light source coupled with at least one LED as taught by Pristash et al. ('480) for benefit and advantage of compactness, long operational life and high energy efficiency.

Regarding claims 9, 11 and 12, Baldwin (748 B2) in view of Pristash et al. ('480) discloses the vehicle accessory system further comprising:

- the light blocker 9,10,14 including aperture portions – defining the indicia LOGO - (Baldwin, Figure 1);
- the light blocker 9,10,14 – element 10 (Baldwin, Figure 2) with reflective back surface 20 (Pristash, Figure 1, column 3, line 51) - attachable with the housing 14;
- the reflector – reflective back surface 20 (Pristash, Figure 1, column 3, line 51) internally reflecting light from the light illuminator 10;
- the at least one light blockers 9,10,14 including a cord retaining structure 16 (Baldwin, Figure 2, column 3, line 19-21);

9. Claim 10 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baldwin (US Patent No.: 6,672,748 B2).

Baldwin (748 B2) discloses a vehicle accessory system including the at least one translucent housing. However, Baldwin ('748 B2) does not teach a translucent housing including at least one portion being essentially circular annulus.

It would be have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the vehicle accessory of Baldwin (748 B2) by providing a translucent housing including at least one portion being essentially circular annulus, since it has been held that a change in shape or configuration, without any criticality, is nothing more than one of numerous shapes that one of ordinary skill in the art.

10. Claim 13 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baldwin (US Patent No.: 6,672,748 B2) in view of Norman (US Patent No.: 6,338,563 B1).

Regarding Claim 8, Baldwin (748 B2) discloses a vehicle accessory system including a housing receiving the illuminator panel. However, Baldwin ('748 B1) dose not specifically teach the housing including a rigid moldable plastic.

On the other hand, Norman ('563 B1) discloses a vehicle accessory system 2 for use with a plug-in accessory outlet, and the system comprising a housing 4 with rounded body 10 made from rigid plastic (Figure 1, column 2, lines 54-56).

It would be have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the vehicle accessory of Baldwin (748 B2) by providing the housing made from regid plastic for benefit and advantage of light weight and the material resistant to water and corrosion.

11. Claim 14-16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Baldwin (US Patent No.: 6,672,748 B2) in view of Myers (US Patent No.: 6,331,915 B1).

Regarding claims 14-16, Baldwin (748 B2) discloses a vehicle accessory system including a housing with a diffuse including stickers, static cling decal, printed art work, or several layers of diffusing sheets. However, Baldwin ('748 B2) does not specifically teach the diffuser including at least one surface texture, at least one diffusing compound, or at least one surface coating.

On the other hand, Myers ('915 B1) discloses a lighting element (Figure 1) optically coupled with a diffuser 1 (Figure 1, column 3, lines 7-11); the diffuser 1 further comprising:

- a surface texture (Figure 1, column 3, lines 22-28); or
- an integrally formed diffusing (Figure 1, column 3, lines 34-36); or
- a surface coating (Figure 1, column 3, lines 22-28).

It would be have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention to modify the vehicle accessory of Baldwin (748 B2) by providing the housing with a diffuser including surface texture, integrally formed diffusing compound, or a surface coating as taught by Myers ('915 B1) for the benefits and advantages of reducing visibility of the individual light source, and for providing uniform light effect.

Conclusion

12. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Strzeletz (U.S. Patent No. 6,598,327 B1), Heskett et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,908,233) and Branson, Sr. (U.S. Patent No. 5,785,410), DeReffele et al. (U.S. Patent

No. Des, 344,101), Miller (U.S. Patent No. 4,574,269), A.P.Lanzon et al. (U.S. Patent No. 3,305,961), Sadowski (U.K. Patent No. GB 2283608 A) and Epstein (U.K. Patent No. GB 2240650 A)

13. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hargobind S Sawhney whose telephone number is 571 272 2380. The examiner can normally be reached on 6:15 - 2:45.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Sandra O'Shea can be reached on 571 272 2378. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

HSS
2/15/05



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